

The Heart Wants by TalklessWritemore

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Relationships: Barbara "Barb" Holland & Nancy Wheeler, Jonathan Byers & Nancy Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Will Byers, Mike Wheeler/Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington & Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington/Nancy Wheeler

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Summary:

It's been two months since Nancy and Jonathan fought against the demagorgon, and Nancy has been working hard on her relationship with Steve - But it's hard to date when your boyfriend reminds you of your best friend's death.

1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

Hi guys!

This is my first time attempting a Stranger Things fanfiction, so I hope you enjoy it. I am constantly editing, so some things will be subject to change.

It's been two months since Nancy and Jonathan fought against the demagorgon. Since Eleven disappeared. Since they found Will. Since Barb *died*.

Honestly, how do you tell someone's parents that their daughter was taken by some disgusting monster?

You just don't.

But that's the good thing about the Chief -- He's *really* good at lying through his teeth.

He convinced everyone that they'd concluded Barb ran away, which Nancy and the Holland's both knew was something she would never do. But it was the only logical answer. There was no evidence, no sign that she was murdered or kidnapped.

Literally nothing.

So naturally they chewed it all up and would forever ask themselves, '*what happened?*' and Nancy felt awful about it. She completely blamed herself.

Maybe that's why it was hard to look at Steve sometimes. That's why she sometimes felt a pain in her chest. Their relationship was just another reminder of her best friend's demise.

Everytime they had sex she thought of Barb and their argument. She thought of her best friend being taken by that *thing*. She thought of all the ways she probably could have saved her, but the thoughts never did her justice.

Nancy attempted to confide in Steve many times, but he just didn't understand. He helped them fight the demagogen but he hadn't seen the whole board. He only knew a small aspect of a larger picture.

Truthfully, Nancy had no one. Barb was dead. Her parents wouldn't understand. When it came to Mike, it was like talking to a wall lately and Jonathan... after what happened, they hardly spoke. They only saw each other around holidays and whenever he came by to pick up Will.

In early November, Nancy tried to fix things up with Steve and let Jonathan have some space so he could be with his family.

On Thanksgiving, Mrs. Wheeler invited the Byers family for dinner because she knew they were tight on money. Joyce refused and said that Jonathan was going to help cook this year and Nancy couldn't help but grin at the prospect of Jonathan making Thanksgiving dinner. He probably would make something delicious and just imagining him cook almost caused Nancy to completely cancel her plans with Steve.

On Christmas Eve, Jonathan stopped by to pick up Will and Nancy gave him a camera. A gift from Steve, since he broke his first one. When Nancy saw Jonathan, her heart fluttered a little and he gave her that same timid smile he gives everyone. It was enough to encourage her to plant a gentle kiss on his cheek and both of their faces turned red. And for some reason, doing that felt like the end of something -- Something potentially wonderful and it made Nancy a little disappointed.

But why should she be upset? She was dating Steve Harrington. The Hawkins golden boy. She was incredibly lucky to have someone like him. But it didn't feel lucky. It felt... like something else, and she couldn't figure out what.

If Barb was still around, she would probably give her good advice. *If Barb was still around.*

It was hard to swallow the facts. She just wanted her best friend back... so much.

New Years had come and gone and break was over, so it was time to go back to school and Nancy made a promise to herself. This year she would really work hard on her relationship with Steve. *Really hard.*

Were all relationships this difficult?

Surely not.

She stepped through the Hawkins High School doors, and ever since her and Steve had started dating, it felt like everyone was looking at her. But recently it wasn't because she was sleeping with him. It was another reason.

Nancy Wheeler cheated on Steve Harrington with that pretentious creep, Jonathan Byers.

The three of them knew it wasn't true, but convincing an entire school that a rumor is a lie is hard. Nancy had this creeping suspicion that Tommy H. and Carol started it. She always thought they didn't really like her, that they were a bunch of fakes. But they were Steve's friends, so she dealt with it.

When Nancy thought about them more, she remembered how they mistreated Barb. They made such rude remarks about her. Even when she disappeared. It was sickening almost.

They were also really mean to Jonathan.

Before everything happened, she could have cared less what they said about him. He was always the older brother of her little brother's friend. He was never someone to her.

But these days she looked at him and saw an actual person.

"Hey, babe," were the first words Steve said to her when he walked up to her locker.

"Hi," Nancy greeted him softly.

"So I was thinking we could catch a movie this weekend since we

haven't really had a date night in awhile."

Nancy opened her locker and stared at the photos of her and Barb taped to the door, and a sigh escaped her lips before she flicked her eyes back to Steve. "I don't know Steve, my mom's been down my neck about doing chores and she wants me to watch Holly--"

"Sounds like a bunch of excuses to me," He interrupted.

He was right. It was a bunch of excuses. Why does she keep making excuses?

"C'mon," He said, grabbing her by the chin gently, "let's do something together."

Nancy lowered his hand and barely kissed his lips. The feeling she used to feel when they kissed just wasn't there anymore. When they first started dating, she felt flutters in her stomach all the time. It was amazing. But now, it wasn't the same.

"Am I doing something wrong?" He asked her.

Nancy shook her head. "It's not you. I just have some stuff on my mind."

"You want to tell me?"

Nancy shook her head, again. Then the bell rang and Steve walked her to class. As they were walking, they passed Jonathan, who gripped his backpack like he was going to float away if he let go.

She noticed he still slouched his shoulders and walked like he was just trying to get away from something. The only difference between then and now, is instead of just staring at the floor, he looked at her and they gave each other a small smile until he was out of sight.

"You still talk to him?" Steve asked, completely surprising Nancy.

"Who? Jonathan? Oh no, not anymore. I mean we talk, but not a lot." She answered.

Steve inhaled deeply. "You know... You're allowed to talk to him," He

told her, "I'm not going to be upset."

Nancy began to play with her hair and pursed her lips together. "No, Steve. It's not like that. I'm not--"

"It's okay."

And Nancy just nodded. What did Steve think of her? What did he think of her 'relationship' with Jonathan? It became really obvious that he wanted Nancy to stay by his side, to the point that he would do anything to keep her from leaving him. Even if it meant giving her permission to spend time with Jonathan Byers.

2. Chapter 2

Nancy missed sitting with Barb at lunch. *Just with Barb.*

Truthfully, she hated sitting with Steve's friends. He had sworn he wasn't going to hang out with them anymore, but that lasted for about a week.

If they weren't talking about Jonathan, they were talking about some other poor kid. And the worst part, they were unbelievably cruel for a couple of teenagers.

But Nancy wasn't innocent either. Before Barb vanished she would sometimes join in on the jokes about the kids in school, including Jonathan. She was never as cruel as them, but it was enough that sometimes she would look over at Barb and see a look of disapproval cross her expression and Nancy would feel kind of guilty.

That's why Barb was such a good person. She could bring you back down to earth. She was honest and kind and rarely was judgemental. Nancy imagined that Barb probably would have gotten along with Jonathan. If only they had met.

"Nancy?" A voice asked, and Nancy flinched, looking at everyone at the lunch table until her eyes met Steve's. "You good?" He continued.

"Oh yeah, I'm fine," She lied.

Steve rubbed her leg and the others were just grinning at her. God knows what they were thinking.

"You've been acting kind of weird lately."

Nancy heard a chuckle. "Probably because she's screwing Byers," Tommy H tried to whisper to Carol, but it was obvious he wanted her to hear.

"What was that?" Nancy snapped.

Tommy raised his eyebrows in surprise, like he wasn't expecting her to say something.

"Come on dude, don't be a dick," Steve commented.

"I'm sorry Steve, as your friend, I can't watch this anymore. How can you sit here and let her *fuck* Jonathan Byers?"

"Easy. She isn't."

Carol laughed. "I call bullshit."

"You guys are terrible, you know that?" Nancy shot.

They both laughed and started mimicking her.

Nancy glared at them both. "Jonathan is actually a really good guy who cares about his family," She told them.

"Jesus. They are sleeping together," Carol cackled.

"I bet she's also a freak. She has to be if she's screwing Jonathan Byers."

"Shut up!" Nancy exclaimed.

They both laughed, *louder*.

Nancy glanced over at Steve and he wasn't even defending her. They continued to just throw insults left and right. How could he just sit there and let them say such awful things?

"I bet they kidnapped Will together, no wonder Barbara ran off."

A chord snapped inside of Nancy and she slammed her hands down, immediately standing up. "I'll talk to you later, Steve," and then she quickly left the cafeteria.

She wasn't trying to be dramatic or anything, but Nancy thought Steve would at least follow her, but here she was -- walking through the empty hallways alone.

But she wasn't completely alone.

Sitting against some lockers in the hall was Jonathan. He appeared to be looking through some photos he had probably taken himself.

Without a word, Nancy decided to slide down next to him, dropping her bag between her legs.

He tensed up his shoulders and his eyes looked over Nancy, clearly surprised and would just say, "Hey."

"Hey."

She looked over his shoulder, examining the photos along with him. "These look good," She complimented.

"Thanks. I took them in the woods."

Nancy couldn't help but smirk at him. "Last time you took photos in the woods, everyone thought you were a stalker."

Jonathan gave a frown. "I shouldn't have taken those." He said that a lot. Like, *a lot*. Nancy wished she could assure him that it was okay. She wasn't upset with him because he knew what he did was wrong.

"It doesn't bother me," She decided to say.

"What?"

"I'm not offended that you took my photo."

"But I took a picture of you shirtless--"

"And you apologized. That's all I needed. An apology."

Jonathan gave her a small smile. His smile was warm. He looked so gentle. So *innocent*. He wasn't the creep that everyone said he was.

"Jonathan," Nancy started, "I know things have been weird between us since..." she paused, "but that week was so strange and weird and crazy, we never had time to just relax."

"Understatement of the year," Jonathan scoffed and Nancy chuckled.

"I was thinking."

"Thinking?"

Nancy began to play with the fuzzies on her sweater. "I was thinking we could actually be friends?"

"Nancy," Jonathan said, giving her a look. It was a look that said, 'no we could never be friends.' But why couldn't they try? What was so wrong with Nancy Wheeler and Jonathan Byers becoming friends?

"I don't really have friends," He said.

"*I know*," Nancy sighed, "but would it be so bad to have even one?"

"Nancy Wheeler friends with Jonathan Byers? It doesn't sound right."

"Those are just words, they don't need to be true."

"Aren't you worried about what your friends will say?" He asked.

"I'd hardly call any of them my friends."

"What about Steve?"

You're allowed to talk to him.

"He's okay with it," She assured him.

Jonathan took in a deep breath. "Okay, friends," he agreed and held out his hand. Nancy grabbed it and his hands were soft and warm, yet she still shivered when they touched.

After they shook on it, they sat there for awhile, holding each others hand and Nancy stared at him -- Taking in his appearance.

Nancy wouldn't lie to herself when deciding if Jonathan was attractive or not. *He really was nice to look at.* But Nancy had this urge, she wanted to push his brown hair out of his face, which always covered his nice chocolate-brown eyes. It took almost everything in her not to move his bangs to the side.

Suddenly, their moment of silence was cut off by the sound of the bell and Jonathan was the first to jerk his hand back and stand up.

"I'll see you later, okay?" Nancy told him, and he just nodded along

with her -- backing away and heading off to class.

I'll see you later.

3. Chapter 3

When Nancy got home, she was surprised to find Mike sitting in their father's lazy boy. His eyes were closed and his head was tilted back and he looked sad... *really sad*.

"Mike?" Nancy spoke up.

"Nancy! What are you doing here?" He questioned, almost jumping out of the chair.

"School ended, weirdo."

"O-oh," He said, quietly.

Nancy raised an eyebrow, staring at him curiously, "But why are you home so early?"

He just pursed his lips.

"Did you skip school, again?"

As soon as she asked, Mike sunk in the chair and frowned. "Please don't tell mom!" He exclaimed.

"Why should I keep quiet?" Nancy asked, giving him a small mischevious smirk.

"I'll do your chores for a month!"

Nancy raised her eyebrows in surprise.

Mike was acting weirder than usual and Nancy was sure of one thing, he had changed a lot since Eleven left. Suddenly a thought came to Nancy. "You didn't stay home because of Eleven, did you?"

At the mention of her name, Mike's face turned white and his face said it all. *He missed her*. Nancy felt bad for her little brother. The first girl he ever liked literally disappeared into thin air and he probably wouldn't see her ever again and it absolutely sucked.

"Nancy, please don't tell mom," Mike repeated, this time his voice was a little solemn.

Nancy sighed, walking up next to her brother and wrapping an arm around him. "Of course I won't Mike. After everything we've been through together, I thought you could trust me."

To be fair though, Mike and Nancy rarely spoke, but it wasn't because they didn't want to. They just both had things going on in their heads. Nancy was trying to figure out her relationship with Steve and of course, she couldn't stop thinking about Barb. Meanwhile all Mike did these days was mope around and think about Eleven. He was getting better each day, but someday he obviously had problems coping.

"You know Mike," Nancy started, "Eleven won't be the first girl you'll love."

"There will never be anyone else like her, though."

Nancy couldn't help but laugh. "Most girls aren't telekinetic badasses, so you'll probably need to lower your standards."

"I don't want anyone else," Mike muttered, and Nancy frowned at him, rubbing circles on his back as she attempted to console him.

"It's gonna be okay, Mike, I promise," She affirmed.

"You're being so nice to me. It's weird."

"Why can't I be nice?"

"Because you're my sister!"

Nancy bursted into laughter and stood up, "You're right. I'll be more mean and tell mom that you skipped school," she joked.

"Don't you dare!" He shouted.

Nancy laughed again before heading upstairs, and going into her room.

Finally, she thought to herself as she closed the door behind her. The first thing Nancy did was collapse on her bed and stare up at the ceiling.

Nancy really did want to be a better sister. She got inspiration from Jonathan who was a better sibling than she had ever been. Seeing him so determined to find his little brother and kill the thing that took Will was amazing and made Nancy realize how much she mistreated Mike.

Mike could've been taken too or worst, killed. If it wasn't for Eleven, he probably would have. But now that Eleven was gone, Nancy wanted to be there for Mike and she would do the same for Holly. Although, Holly is probably a lot safer since she is with their mom all the time.

Nancy sat up and looked at the bulletin board across from her, hanging on the wall. It had a bunch of photos pinned to it. Most of them were of her and Barb and they were memories she truly wish she treasured more.

There was so much Nancy wanted to tell her. First, she wanted to apologize. Then she wanted to tell her how Jonathan Byers and her teamed up to take out a monster. And she wanted to rant about her relationship with Steve and all the good and bad things that came with it. She wanted to tell her *everything*.

Sadly, Barb was gone forever. So she had really no one to talk to. When she missed Barb like this, Nancy glanced at her telephone and thought about calling Jonathan. Nancy thought about Jonathan a lot. He's always been there when Nancy needed someone -- She trusted him.

A part of Nancy knew that if she called him, he would probably come over, even if it was just to talk.

